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SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA POLITICAL NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 25-31

¶1. (SBU) This was written in partnership with the Open Source Center's Pretoria Bureau. The newsletter is open to contributions from officers in the Embassy or in the Consulates who wish to highlight political trends. Contact Madeline Seidenstricker or Jonathan Smallridge for more information, or to make contributions. The newsletter also is available on the Political Section's blog, "A View from South Africa," found on intelink.gov.

Domestic News

Trafficking Suspect Denied Bail

¶2. A 34-year old Thai woman arrested for human trafficking was denied bail by the Rustenburg Magistrate's Court on December 29 because she was deemed to be a flight risk. Giang Brooderyk was arrested on November 26 for allegedly assisting women from Thailand to enter South Africa illegally. The accused allegedly promised the women work at her massage parlor, but then forced her victims into prostitution. The case has been postponed until February 1 for further investigation. Pretoria News, December 31.

President Zuma to Wed, Again

¶3. President Jacob Zuma plans to marry Thobeka Mabhiya on January
¶4. Details of the wedding are being kept under wraps. The ceremony is scheduled to take place exactly two years after President Zuma married Nopumelelo Ntuli. The new first lady-to-be was born in 1973 in Durban and has a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Zululand. President Zuma is also currently married to Sizakele Khumalo. President Zuma and Home Affairs Minister Nkozasana Dlamini-Zuma were divorced in 1998, and Zuma's former wife Kate died in 2000. The Sowetan, December 20, 2009.

International News

South Africa to Strengthen Ties with BRIC Countries

¶4. (U) Business Day reported on 29 December that South Africa planned to strengthen trade ties next year with other dynamic industrializing economies such as China, India, and Brazil, which united in a common front at this month's climate change talks in Copenhagen. The common position of the four countries, which all have industrializing economies but are burdened with severe developmental challenges, is a binding force in international negotiations on a number of fronts as they resist attempts by developed nations to categorize them as developed, rather than developing. What the world needed with trade and climate change negotiations, Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies said this week, was for developed countries to make big concessions to developing countries to build a fairer world. Instead, strong demands for concessions were made against the larger developing countries,

including SA. As far as strengthening south- south trade was concerned, Davies said discussions were in the pipeline on an enlargement of the trade agreement between India, the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) and Latin American trade grouping Mercosur. [Johannesburg Business Day Online in English -- Website of privately owned regional newspaper; URL: <http://www.bday.co.za/>]

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